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STATE FOR DRL/IRF (MATES AND HEWETT) AND EUR/AGS (VIKMANIS
KELLER)

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: FOLLOW-UP ON SUN MYUNG MOON CASE IN AUSTRIA

REF: A. STATE 227506

- [1](#)B. ROBISON-MATES E-MAIL 12/16/05
- [1](#)C. ROBISON-EUR/AGS E-MAILS 10/13/05

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[1](#)1. (SBU) Per ref (a), on December 28, EconPolCouns and EconPolOff met with Eva Neumann, head of the Passport and Visa Issues Unit in the Ministry of Interior (MOI), to discuss the Ministry's October 2005 denial of a request by Sun Myung Moon and his wife, Hak Ja Han, to enter Austria. Moon and Han sought to enter Austria on October 28 to attend an event under the sponsorship of the Interreligious and International Federation for World Peace, a Unification Church affiliate. We stressed that religious belief should not be a basis for denying an individual's entry to a country.

[1](#)2. (SBU) Neumann said Austria denied visas to Moon and Han because Germany had already listed them in the European Union's Schengen Information System, or so-called "Schengen List." (Note: Neumann said the identity of the country which applies a Schengen ban is not a matter of public record, and she asked us not to make public reference to the fact that it was Germany which applied the ban on Moon and Han. End note.) Neumann said the fact of the existing Schengen ban was determinative -- there was no provision for reviewing or otherwise second-guessing the reasons for the original ban.

[1](#)3. (SBU) Neumann said Moon and Han made written application for a waiver of the Schengen ban. She said Austria grants official waivers for only two reasons: humanitarian grounds or the Austrian national interest. In this case, Neumann said, Moon did not qualify for an exemption on either ground. Neumann said that Moon's advanced age, which Moon's supporters have cited as grounds for a humanitarian waiver, did not qualify because the proposed visit to Austria had nothing to do with Moon's age. Neumann said religious beliefs did not enter into the Austrian decision.

[1](#)4. (SBU) Neumann said the MOI has received many letters of complaint from individuals and NGOs regarding this case. However, she said it was "easy" to respond, because the reason for the Austrian decision (an existing Schengen listing) is clear. Post also continues to receive periodic calls from the Austrian chapter of the "Forum for Religious Freedom" asking for assistance in lifting the Schengen ban on Moon.
KILNER